

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 HAMBUR 00289 211020Z

10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HAMBURG 0289

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN COMMUNAL ELECTIONS

REF: HAMBURG 218

1. ON MARCH 24 COMMUNAL ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN IN TOWNSHIPS AND VILLAGES AND FOR MEMBERS OF 11 COUNTY COUNCILS AND THE 4 CITY COUNCILS OF FLENSBURG, KIEL, LUEBECK AND NEUMUENSTER. IN THE FEW REMAINING DAYS OF THE CAMPAIGN THE FOLLO-
ING SEEMS TO BE THE MOOD OF THE VOTERS AND, IN OUR OPINION, THE PROBABLE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION ON A DISTRICT-BY-DISTRICT BASIS.

2. THE HEAVYWEIGHTS OF GERMAN NATIONAL POLITICAL LIFE HAVE COME AND GONE AFTER PERFUNCTORY APPEARANCES ON BEHALF OF THEIR PARTY'S CANDIDATES: BRANDT, ARENDT, LAURITZEN AND BAHR FOR THE SPD; KOHL, CARSTENS, BIEDENKOPF, SCHROEDER AND VON HASSEL FOR THE CDU; SCHEEL, GENSCHER AND ERTL FOR THE FDP. RESPONDING TO SPD RANK AND FILE CRITICISM OF THE FAILURE OF THE CDU CONTROLLED LAND GOVERNMENT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 HAMBUR 00289 211020Z

TO RESOLVE THE RELATIVELY HIGHER UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN THE WESTERN

AREAS OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, EGON BAHR MADE HIS MOST EFFECTIVE APPEARANCE IN HUSUM ON A PLATFORM WITH PER HAEKKERUP, FORMER SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FORMIN OF DENMARK, TO COMPARE INSIDIOUSLY THE PROGRESSIVE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONTIGUOUS AREA OF DENMARK WITH THE MORE INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSED PARTS OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN. IT WAS PROBABLY BAHR'S ONLY BIT OF SHREWD ORATORY DURING HIS OTHERWISE INEFFECTUAL AND SHORT CAMPAIGN HERE.

3. DESPITE THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BONN PARTY LEADERS, IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THEY HAVE INFLUENCED ONE WAY OR ANOTHER THE COURSE OF THE CAMPAIGN TO ANY SIGNIFICANT DEGREE. IT HAS BEEN RATHER THE HOME GROWN POLITICIANS - MINISTER PRES. GERHARD STOLTENBERG FOR THE CDU AND PARTY CHAIRMAN JOACHIM STEFFEN FOR THE SPD WHO HAVE INFLUENCED THE COURSE OF THEIR PARTY FORTUNES MORE THAN ANY OF THE CAMPAIGNERS INVOLVED BUT FOR DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED REASONS. STOLTENBERG HAS PLAYED AN EXTREMELY ACTIVE ROLE AND HAS CAMPAIGNED INDEFATIGABLY FOR HIS PARTY. CONFIDENT, GOOD-HUMORED AND OBVIOUSLY RIDING THE CREST OF THE CDU WAVE IN THE RECENT HAMBURG AND RHEINLAND-PFALZ ELECTIONS, HE HAS CONCENTRATED HIS RHETORIC ON WHAT HE HAS DESCRIBED AS THE BONN GOVT'S FRUITLESS OSTPOLITIK AND ITS INEPT BUNGLING OF ITS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. HIS MOST TELLING SHAFTS HAVE BEEN DIRECTED AT THE SPD'S MOST VULNERABLE SPOT IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN - THE RADICALIZATION OF THE PARTY WHICH HAS INDEED DEMORALIZED THE SPD IN THIS STATE AND HAS THREATENED TO SHATTER THE PARTY INTO IMPOTENT RIGHT AND LEFT WING FACTIONS.

4. THIS DISSENSION WITHIN THE SPD RANKS AS REPORTED IN REFTTEL WILL, IN OUR OPINION, CAUSE THE PARTY SOME CRIPPLING LOSSES AT THE POLLS. JOACHIM STEFFEN SEEMS TO HAVE SULLENLY WITHDRAWN FROM HIS PARTY'S LEADERSHIP AND HAS ALLOWED IT TO BECOME USURPED BY VARIOUS MILITANTLY RADICAL LEFT WING ELEMENTS. SERIOUSLY INCAPACITATED AS A RESULT OF AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT IN 1972, HE HAS ONLY HALF-HEARTEDLY ATTEMPTED TO DIRECT HIS CAMPAIGN FROM A VACATION RESORT IN BAVARIA. STEFFEN HAS RECENTLY DELIVERED ANOTHER DEVISIVE BLOW AT SPD PARTY UNITY BY HIS PUBLIC CRITICISM OF CHANCELLOR BRANDT IN A PETULANT CHARGE THAT THE CHANCELLOR "SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON MAKING DECISIONS RATHER THAN INDULGING IN POLITICAL BABBLING (SPRUECHE MACHEN)". THOSE SPD LAND POLITICIANS WHO HAVE BEEN FORCED TO CARRY THE FIGHT HAVE CONCENTRATED ON

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HAMBUR 00289 211020Z

RATHER LACKLUSTER ISSUES SUCH AS RAISING THE STANDARD OF LIVING FOR THE WORKING MAN, EDUCATIONAL REFORMS AND MORE EXTENSIVE CODETERMINATION FOR WORKERS IN INDUSTRY. THESE RATHER SHOPWORN ISSUES HAVE FAILED TO EXCITE VERY MUCH ENTHUSIASM ON THE PART OF AUDIENCES IN WORKING CLASS DISTRICTS WHO HAVE HEARD ALL THIS RHETORIC BEFORE.

5. ON BALANCE, THEREFORE, WE DETECT A GENUINE BUOYANCY ON THE

PART OF THE CDU THAT THE MOMENTUM SET IN PLAY BY THE ELECTIONS IN HAMBURG AND RHEINLAND-PFALZ WILL CARRY THE DAY IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN. THERE IS NO DISGUIISING THE WEARINESS AND THE DISCOURAGEMENT OF THE SPD POLITICIANS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN RECENTLY ABOUT THE PROBABLY OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS THIS SUNDAY.

6. AT THE PRESENT TIME, THE COMPOSITION OF THE 4 MAJOR CITY COUNCILS IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN IS AS FOLLOWS:

	SPD	CDU	FDP	IND	SSW#	TOTAL
A. FLENSBURG	17	14			8	39
B. KIEL	30	19			49	
C. LUEBECK	22	22	2	3		49
D. NEUMUENSTER	20	17	2			39

SUEDSCHLESWIGSCHER WAEHLERVERBAND - THE POLITICAL PARTY OF THE DANISH MINORITY.

7. OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE ELECTIONS WILL PROBABLY DEVELOP ROUGHLY AS FOLLOWS:

A. FLENSBURG - THE SPD WILL LOSE ITS PLURALITY. IT WILL, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO ENJOY AN UNEASY COALITION WITH A RESTIVE SSW.

B. KIEL - THE SPD WILL LOSE ITS MAJORITY. WE EXPECT THE FDP TO CROSS THE 5 PCT THRESHOLD AND THEREBY WIN A SMALL NUMBER OF SEATS IN THE CITY COUNCIL. TOGETHER, THE SPD AND THE FDP WILL THUS BE ABLE TO FORM A GOVERNING COALITION.

C. LUEBECK - THE CDU WILL WIN A PLURALITY OR POSSIBLY EVEN A MAJORITY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HAMBUR 00289 211020Z

D. NEUMUENSTER - THE CDU WILL WINN A PLURALITY OR POSSIBLY EVEN A MAJORITY.

8. AT THE PRESENT TIME IN THE 12 COUNTY COUNCILS THE CDU ENJOYS A MAJORITY IN 7, A PLURALITY IN 2 AND SHARES AN EQUAL NUMBER OF SEATS IN 2 COUNTY COUNCILS. THE SPD HAS A PLURALITY IN ONLY ONE COUNTY COUNCIL. IN THE NEWLY REORGANIZED 11 COUNTIES, WE BELIEVE THAT THE CDU WILL SWEEP THE SLATE CLEAN AND WIN A MAJORITY IN 10 AND A PLURALITY IN ONE. BROGAN

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